

Ms. Portillo's most lasting legacy was her service as founding member and Executive Director of Project Amiga, a non-profit, community based organization that provides education and computer training, support services, job placement and other assistance to at-risk youth and adults in Los Angeles County. Irene personally oversaw Project Amiga's training programs, and mentored many Welfare to Work participants and at-risk youth to help improve their lives and become self-sufficient.

Irene truly loved her community. Not only did she create a whole new organization in Project Amiga to provide badly needed support services for our most economically disadvantaged and vulnerable populations, but she also dedicated much of her life to educating and molding our youth. She did this through many different avenues, as a tenured instructor at Rio Hondo College and as a Presidential Appointee on the National Advisory Councils on Vocational Education and Women's Educational Programs.

Irene also worked hard to give folks a second chance at life, as the first Hispanic woman to manage one of the largest California State Employment Development Department offices. Through the EDD, she worked with felons recently released from the penal system and transitioning back into the community. Irene received many awards for her work, from L.A. Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa, Secretary of Labor Hilda Solis and many others.

I urge my House colleagues to join me in honoring Ms. Irene Portillo for her record of community service, her indomitable spirit and her remarkable service and contributions to her community and to our nation.

RECOGNIZING GILBERT HOLMES,  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF THE  
ACLU OF INDIANA, FOR A LIFE  
OF PUBLIC SERVICE

**HON. ANDRÉ CARSON**

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, March 22, 2012*

Mr. CARSON of Indiana. Mr. Speaker, on the occasion of his retirement, I would like to congratulate Gilbert Holmes for a lifetime of trailblazing leadership and devoted public service.

From humble roots growing up in Sparta, Illinois, Gil ascended to the rank of Lieutenant Colonel in the U.S. Army, where he served valiantly for twenty years, including in Vietnam and as aide-de-camp to Major General Fred-eric Davison.

Upon leaving the service, Gil applied his organizational acumen with venerable Hoosier organizations, including the Indianapolis Museum of Art, Methodist Hospital, and Lincoln National Corporation.

From 1989 to 1996, Gil rendered distinguished public service as Commissioner of the Indiana Bureau of Motor Vehicles, and later, as President and CEO of IndyGo.

Gil's career culminated in his selection as executive director of the American Civil Liberties Union of Indiana, where he has served ably for the past three years as both steward and advocate.

Gil has spent his life combating prejudice, proving skeptics wrong, and empowering those with whom he works to achieve great

things. On March 31, 2012, Gil will retire, leaving behind a legacy of lives bettered by his mentorship and leadership. On behalf of the 7th Congressional District of Indiana, I wish him well in his retirement and extend to him our gratitude for his commitment to his fellow Hoosiers and to the advancement of civil rights for all.

## PROTECTING ACCESS TO HEALTHCARE ACT

SPEECH OF

**HON. LEE TERRY**

OF NEBRASKA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, March 21, 2012*

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union had under consideration the bill (H.R. 5) to improve patient access to health care services and provide improved medical care by reducing the excessive burden the liability system places on the health care delivery system:

Mr. TERRY. Mr. Chair, I support full repeal of the Independent Payment Advisory Board. The health reform law takes away power that has traditionally been left to Congress, and places health care decisions in the hands of an unelected, board of bureaucrats.

Unfortunately, the House has decided to attach a bipartisan bill to repeal the IPAB, with legislation that is unconstitutional and I believe a federalization of our tort reform system. This is a blatant violation of Article 1, Section 8 and a violation of the 10th Amendment.

Tort law is an area of law traditionally left completely to states discretion. In fact, it's one of the few rights left to the states. Most states have implemented some form of medical liability laws. It is not the federal government's role to say that one state's laws are better than another's or even mandate one state's beliefs on another.

Many of us believe the health reform law is a government takeover of our health care system. If one considers themselves to be a true state's rights person, why do we give states the latitude and ability to do it, and then take it away with a one-size-fits all mandate from the federal government.

## TRIBUTE TO PETE P. PETERS

**HON. JIM COSTA**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, March 22, 2012*

Mr. COSTA. Mr. Speaker, I rise to pay tribute to the life of one of our Nation's most principled and generous business leaders, Mr. Pete P. Peters. Sadly, Mr. Peters passed away on March 13, 2012 at the age of 94. His remarkable impact on California's San Joaquin Valley will ensure that his legacy lives on for years to come.

The son of Armenian immigrants, Pete was truly a shining example of the American Dream. With hard work and perseverance, he and his family were able to become business leaders and generous community benefactors.

Mr. Peters, and his brother Leon, were both notable entrepreneurs; he was a self-trained engineer who pioneered a design for a stain-

less steel circular tanks that have been used for decades by winemakers worldwide. His innovative spirit and passion allowed the brothers to run Valley Foundry and Machine Works as a family operation.

Upon his retirement in 1989, Mr. Peters immersed himself in our community and was active in a number of organizations. He oversaw the Leon S. Peters Foundation and served as chairman of the Pete P. Peters Foundation. While he did not have the opportunity to go to college, Mr. Peters was an ardent advocate for higher education and felt it was necessary for young Americans have the opportunity to go to college, regardless of their financial circumstances. As a result, he was an enthusiastic supporter of colleges and universities in the San Joaquin Valley, including: California State University, Fresno (CSU Fresno), Fresno City College, and Reedley College.

Mr. Peters was also a supporter of Community Regional Medical Center, Valley Public Television, the San Joaquin River Parkway and Conservation Trust, and the San Joaquin Valley Winemaking Association. His numerous gifts to our Valley enhanced thousands of lives.

Recognizing his immense contributions to the San Joaquin Valley, California, and our Nation, CSU Fresno conferred on him an honorary doctoral degree—the CSU's highest honor.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in celebrating the life of Mr. Pete P. Peters. His humility and unwavering commitment to the improvement of our community not only made him an asset to the San Joaquin Valley, but a role model for our entire Nation.

## PERSONAL EXPLANATION

**HON. ADAM KINZINGER**

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, March 22, 2012*

Mr. KINZINGER of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, unfortunately, I was unable to cast my vote on H.R. 886, which would request Treasury to mint coins in commemoration of the 225th anniversary of the establishment of the United States Marshal Service. Had I been able to, I would have cast an "aye" vote in favor of the legislation.

## OUR UNCONSCIONABLE NATIONAL DEBT

**HON. MIKE COFFMAN**

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, March 22, 2012*

Mr. COFFMAN of Colorado. Mr. Speaker, on January 20, 2009, the day President Obama took office, the national debt was \$10,626,877,048,913.08.

Today, it is \$15,574,428,564,198.34. We've added \$4,947,551,515,285.26 to our debt in 3 years. This is debt our nation, our economy, and our children could have avoided with a balanced budget amendment.

TRIBUTE TO RICHARD  
MILANOVICH

**HON. KEN CALVERT**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, March 22, 2012*

Mr. CALVERT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor and pay tribute to a community leader and friend of mine, Richard Milanovich. Richard was the longtime chairman of Riverside County's Agua Caliente Band of Cahuilla Indians. On Sunday, March 11, 2012, Richard passed away at the age of 69 with his family at his bedside at Eisenhower Medical Center in Rancho Mirage. He will be deeply missed.

In 1942, Richard was born on the Soboba Reservation in the San Jacinto area and grew up in subsidized housing in Palm Springs. At that time, the tribe was almost entirely dependent on government help, eating out of government-issued cans. As a boy, he attended Cahuilla Elementary School and Palm Springs High School. After high school, he served honorably in the United States Army and in 1972 he returned to the Palm Springs area. He unsuccessfully ran for Tribal Council three times between 1972 and 1978. Finally, in 1978 he was elected to the Tribal Council and in 1984 he was elected Chairman. From 1984 to 1989, Chairman Milanovich helped craft groundbreaking land-use agreements with city of Cathedral City, city of Rancho Mirage, and Riverside County, modeled on an agreement struck with city of Palm Springs in the late 1970s, while he was a member of the Tribal Council. The intergovernmental deals were among the first of their kind and served as a model for Tribes throughout the rest of the country.

Richard Milanovich was an early proponent of allowing California tribes to have gambling on tribal lands. After the successful negotiation of the land-use agreements with local cities, Richard moved forward and in 1998 the Agua Caliente tribe, along with other tribes, pushed and passed Proposition 5 which allowed for gambling on tribal lands. Although the proposition was ruled unconstitutional, the tribes were able to later negotiate pacts with then-Governor Gray Davis and a subsequent proposition passed which put the pacts in place. Richard would later win another battle in 2008 when the voters approved a casino-expansion deal.

Richard never lost sight of the poor conditions that he grew up in and early on decided to become a champion for his people. He led the Agua Caliente tribe for nearly three decades and helped California tribes become self-sufficient moving many out of poverty through the success of the Indian casinos. Richard successfully negotiated on the local, state and federal level to advance the priorities of the Agua Caliente tribe and throughout his career he remained humble, compassionate, and engaging.

Richard Milanovich changed the course of history for California and, most importantly, for the Indian community in California. He saw circumstances that disadvantaged the Indian people and set about to change them. Milanovich never wavered in his commitment, and despite all obstacles persevered for the betterment of his tribe and the entire Indian community in California. His leadership, vision and uncompromising compassion were truly

an inspiration to his people and testimony to his character.

On Wednesday, March 21, 2012, a memorial service celebrating Richard Milanovich's extraordinary life was held at the Palm Springs Convention Center. Milanovich will always be remembered for his incredible work ethic, generosity, contributions to the Indian Community and love of family. His dedication to his work, family, and tribe are a testament to a life lived well and a legacy that will continue. I extend my condolences to his family and friends; although Richard may be gone, the light and goodness he brought to the world remain and will never be forgotten.

PROTECTING ACCESS TO  
HEALTHCARE ACT

SPEECH OF

**HON. EDOLPHUS TOWNS**

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, March 21, 2012*

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union had under consideration the bill (H.R. 5) to improve patient access to health care services and provide improved medical care by reducing the excessive burden the liability system places on the health care delivery system:

Mr. TOWNS. Mr. Chair. I rise today to express my objections to the inclusion of H.R. 5, the HEALTH Act into H.R. 452, Medicare Decisions Accountability Act of 2011. Medical malpractice tort reform does not belong as a part of the repeal of the Independent Payment Advisory Board, or IPAB.

The HEALTH Act is an inherently flawed bill that should not be considered by the House and should not be included with H.R. 452. It does not fix the problem of medical malpractice or the supposed insurance "crisis". Instead, it takes control away from the states, where it belongs. This legislation was originally conceived over 20 years ago and has yet to pass both houses. There is a reason for that.

The cap imposed by H.R. 5 is both unjust and unfair. It does not take into account the severity of a patient's injury or whether negligence is at issue.

The real problem we are facing is patient safety. If we fix that, then there will be no need to try and take away from the states their right to legislate this issue. In a Wall Street Journal article, it was found that by focusing on patient safety, anesthesiologists went from being one of the most risky specialties to insure to having one of the lowest malpractice insurance premiums. In fact, their premiums are lower now than they were 20 years ago. We should not focus on medical malpractice tort reform, but rather education and training for medical professionals.

I am a strong proponent of repealing the IPAB, but cannot in good conscience vote for this bill because it is not a clean repeal.

The IPAB takes away from Congress the ability to determine Medicare payments to doctors and hospitals. It consists of 15 members who are unelected by the People, but rather are appointed by the President. The members of the IPAB are not accountable to anyone once appointed and therefore Congress loses much of the power it has to shape

Medicare payment policies. By repealing the IPAB, the ACA will be strengthened, not weakened.

If this bill was as it was passed in both the Energy & Commerce and Ways & Means committees, there would be no controversy from many of my colleagues on the Democratic side. While I supported a clean repeal of IPAB in Energy & Commerce, I cannot support a bill that will have such a profoundly negative impact on the 74,000 Medicare eligible constituents in my district. I advise my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to vote "no" on this bill as currently written.

SALUTE TO BISHOP JOHN HENRY  
SHEARD ON THE CELEBRATION  
OF HIS EXCEPTIONAL LEADERSHIP  
IN THE CHURCH OF GOD IN  
CHRIST

**HON. GARY C. PETERS**

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, March 22, 2012*

Mr. PETERS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to salute Bishop John Henry Sheard, Pastor of Greater Mitchell Church of God in Christ of Detroit, for his exceptional leadership in the great state of Michigan.

From humble beginnings in a rural town in Mississippi to a leadership position in the International Church of God In Christ (COGIC), Bishop John Henry Sheard has been a great spiritual leader and true pioneer.

Bishop Sheard moved to Detroit at a very early age. Under the tutelage of the Bishop John Seth Bailey, he moved up through the ranks of the Church. After being ordained, Bishop Sheard was installed as pastor of Mitchell Street COGIC in January, 1982. Displaying great leadership skills, he moved his growing congregation to a larger location in the city of Detroit. It is current known as Greater Mitchell Church on God in Christ.

Bishop Sheard was later elevated to District Superintendent, Jurisdictional President of the Youth Department, and to the Jurisdiction's prestigious Executive Board. Ultimately, he was consecrated Bishop of the First Ecclesiastical Jurisdiction of Michigan Southwest by the General Board of the Church of God In Christ, with Bishop L.H. Ford as Presiding Bishop. For more than nearly 20 years, Bishop Sheard has presided over the First Ecclesiastical Jurisdiction of Michigan Southwest and during this time the Jurisdiction has made tremendous strides.

Known as a man of impeccable integrity and great leadership, Bishop Sheard has traveled throughout the country. His peers have twice elected him overwhelmingly as the Chairman of the Board of Bishops for the Church of God In Christ, Inc. He humbly chairs this prestigious Board, which is comprised of about 200 Bishops worldwide. He has earned many awards and accolades, including being honored by the Ohio Southern Christian Leadership Conference as "Bishop of the Year for 2009."

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me today in recognizing and paying tribute to Bishop John H. Sheard, Pastor of Greater Mitchell Church of God In Christ, on the celebration of his exceptional leadership in the great state of Michigan.